

## Biodiversity Record: The mangrove crab, *Neosarmatium smithi*, on Saint John's Island

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**Subject:** *Neosarmatium smithi* (Malacostraca: Decapoda: Brachyura: Sesarmidae)

**Subject identified by:** Bee Yan Lee.

**Location, date and time:** Singapore Strait, Saint John's Island; 13 January 2025; around 0835 hrs

**Habitat:** Parkland, on a concrete path about 300 m from a patch of mangrove forest (Bendera Bay mangrove).

**Observers:** Hashani Dharan and Leow Yu Xun.

**Observation:** The subject, around 30 mm in carapace width, was found crouching motionless on wet concrete ground, on a rainy day, outside the Saint John's Island National Marine Laboratory.



Fig. 1. In-situ dorso-frontal view of *Neosarmatium smithi*. (Photograph by: Leow Yu Xun). Fig. 2. Frontal view of the same animal (Photograph by: Hashani Dharan).

**Remarks:** *Neosarmatium smithi* is classified as an obligate mangrove dweller in Singapore (Tan & Ng, 1994) where it was hitherto known only from the northern part of Singapore, in patches of mangroves along the Johor Strait. Based on holdings of this species in the Lee Kong Chian Natural History Museum at the National University of Singapore, as well as field observations by the first author, *Neosarmatium smithi* has been recorded from Lim Chu Kang, Mandai, Loyang, Pasir Ris, and Pulau Tekong. The present sighting marks the first record for this species in the southern part of the country in the Singapore Strait.

*Neosarmatium smithi* is distributed in the Indo-West Pacific region, from southern Africa and Madagascar eastwards to the Philippines, China, and Japan (Davie, 1994). The species typically inhabits mangrove forests where it feeds on fallen leaves (Davie, 1994; Fratini et al., 2000). By consuming leaf litter, it may play an important role in the nutrient cycle by facilitating the reduction of iron compounds in the environment (Nakanishi et al., 2020).

**Literature cited:**

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